

Appl. No. 09/745,177
Amdt. Dated Nov. 17, 2003
Reply to Office Action of Sep. 17, 2003

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-3 and 9-26 are pending.

Claims 1-3 and 9-26 stand rejected.

I. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-3, 9-14, 16, and 18-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hatch et al (USPN 5,820,491) in view of Yamamoto et al. (USPN 6,063,859) and Blank et al. (5,965,686). The Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 3, 13, 18, which are not taught by the references.

The combination of the '491 patent with the '859 and '686 patent references does not teach either singly or in combination a tin catalyst combined with at least one additional metal catalyst. The Hatch et al. '491 patent teaches the use of a tin catalyst for drying, but does not teach the combination with a second additional metal catalyst. The Blank et al. '686 patent teaches the use of a zirconium metal catalyst combined with a hafnium metal catalyst. The Yamamoto et al. '859 patent teaches the use of a tin catalyst, but does not teach a combination of catalysts.

The Blank et al. '686 patent teaches the combination of two specific metal catalysts, zirconium and hafnium, but

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specifically rejects the use of a tin catalysts, either singly or in combination with a second metal catalyst. Tin catalysts in the '686 patent are taught as being inferior in both its performance properties and toxicity levels. Thus one skilled in the art of golf ball coating would not be motivated to combine what is described as an inferior tin catalyst in the '686 patent with either zirconium or any other metal catalyst to improve drying.

It is improper, with regard to claims 3, 13 and 18 to use the '686 patent to teach the combination of a tin catalyst with a second metal catalyst because the '686 patent specifically teaches away from using tin as a catalyst, either alone, or in combination with another metal catalyst. Blank et al. does not teach or suggest either singly or in combination the limitations of claims 3, 13 and 18.

Applicants respond to the rejection of remaining claims 1-2, 9-12, 14, 16, and 19-26 with amendment of the claims 1, 11, 24 and 26 to more particularly point out what the applicants consider to be their invention by including the limitation that the combination of at least two metal catalysts must include tin. The combination of metal catalysts of amended claims 1, 11, 24 and 26 are allowable over the examiner's cited combination, which does not teach or suggest the combination, or the desirability of combining tin with another metal catalyst to improve drying.

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The amendment of claims 1-3, 9-14, 16, and 18-26 either directly or through dependence upon an amended claim does not teach each and every limitation of the amended claims either singly or in combination. Entry of the rejection does not require further search as the limitations were originally present in previously reviewed claims 3, 13 and 18.

Claims 15, 17 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hatch et al (USPN 5,820,491) in view of Yamamoto et al. (USPN 6,063,859), Blank et al. (5,965,686) and further in view of Sugimoto et al. (5,725,443) and Yoneyama (6,210,295). Claims 15, 17 and 19 have been amended through their dependency upon independent claim 11. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendment of independent claim 11.

The rejection of claims 15, 17 and 19 are moot in view of the amendment of independent claim 11 to include tin combined with a second metal catalyst. The Sugimoto et al '443 patent is silent regarding metal catalyst. The Yoneyama '295 patent discusses a tin catalyst, but is silent regarding its combination with any other metal catalyst. The limitations of claims 15, 17 and 19 are not taught either singly or in combination by the cited references. Applicants respectfully request entry of the after final amendment of claim 11 as it addresses all issues and does not require a further search.

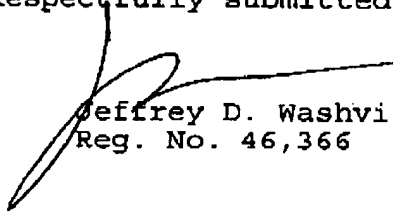
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V. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and removal of all rejections and entry of amendments to claims 1-3 and 9-26, which are clearly patentable as amended over the cited prior art combinations.

Please feel free to call collect with any questions regarding this submission or any matters relating to this application.

Respectfully submitted,

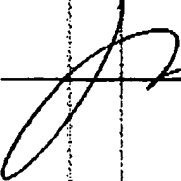

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The undersigned hereby certifies that this paper along with any paper or document referred to therein as being attached or enclosed, is being deposited with the United States Postal Service to the Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450- VIA fax to (703)-872-9306 This 17th day of November, 2003.


Jeffrey D. Washville